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TAGS: [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [ENRG](#) [ECON](#) [FI](#) [AF](#) [GT](#) [VE](#) [RS](#) [GG](#)  
SUBJECT: DAS PEKALA,S OCTOBER 4 MEETINGS WITH FINNISH MFA  
OFFICIALS

Classified By: Econ Chief Jane Messenger for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

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Summary  
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[¶1.](#) (SBU) EUR DAS Mark Pekala visited Helsinki October 4-6 to participate in the Nordic-Baltic Chiefs of Mission Conference and to consult with Finnish officials on bilateral and transatlantic issues. In separate meetings with Finnish Political Director Pilvi-Sisko Vierros-Villeneuve and Director General for the Americas and Asia Elina Kalkku, Pekala discussed Finland,s EU Presidency, the Middle East, Kosovo, North Korea, NATO, Georgia, and the October 24-25 U.S.-EU High Level Dialogue on Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable Development (HLD), which will be hosted by Finland in Helsinki. Vierros-Villeneuve gave an emphatic explanation of why Finland was unable to provide AK-47s to Afghanistan. Pekala raised U.S. support for Guatemala,s bid for a UNSC seat and the status of the visa waiver program. End Summary.

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Finland,s EU Presidency  
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[¶2.](#) (SBU) Vierros-Villeneuve said that Finland,s EU Presidency had been "off-track" since the Lebanon crisis broke in July. Finnish priorities had been subsumed to some extent by the situation in the Middle East. Now that the crisis was entering a new phase, the GoF hoped to refocus the Presidency on upcoming events such as the EU-India Summit (October) and the EU-Russia Summit (November).

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Middle East  
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[¶3.](#) (SBU) Pekala noted that Secretary Rice was in the Middle East to take stock of the situation, not to broker any particular agreement. Vierros-Villeneuve agreed that her visit was important, and opined that support for Abbas was imperative at the present moment. She said that she was particularly pleased that the Secretary had taken up the access/movement issue since the GoF was concerned Gaza would collapse unless progress was made in this area soon. Vierros-Villeneuve reported that when Abbas had requested additional EU assistance, Commissioner for External Relations Ferrero-Waldner had balked. This was unhelpful, and member states needed to come forward with assistance at this critical time. DAS Pekala agreed that it was important not to punish the Palestinian people, but instead to engage in creative thinking about how to help them without supporting the current regime.

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No AK-47s for Afghanistan  
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[¶4.](#) (C) Vierros-Villeneuve said categorically that Finland would not provide surplus AK-47s to Afghanistan. She

emphasized that myriad problems made it impossible ranging from political considerations, to re-export license difficulties with Germany, to domestic legislation. Finnish public opinion, as well as Finland,s parliament, would overwhelmingly oppose any transfer. Vierros-Villeneuve worried that Finland,s leadership of the UN Small Arms Treaty process would also be compromised, particularly with its NGO partners. There were licensing problems, since the arms originally came from (East) Germany. Finland would have to secure a German re-export license and it was unlikely the EU,s Code of Conduct would allow this. Finally, Moscow was already complaining about other AK-47 re-export issues, and transfer of the weapons in question would create further difficulties for Finland with Russia. Vierros-Villeneuve noted, however, that Finland was interested in exploring other opportunities for assisting Afghan forces. Pekala said he understood these serious obstacles; he asked for more specific information on the export-license issue, on domestic legislation, and on the number of AK-47s held by the Finns. He said he hoped to continue this conversation with Finland.

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Serbia/Kosovo  
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15. (C) Vierros-Villeneuve asked about UN Special Envoy for Kosovo Ahtisaari,s report at a meeting of EU Defense Ministers that the U.S. now believed the timeline for an agreement on Kosovo should be extended given the current difficulties. Pekala replied that the U.S. continued to seek a solution before the end of the year. During a recent trip to Belgrade, A/S Fried delivered a clear and unequivocal message to the Serbs that there was no going back. The past (and the status quo) are unacceptable. The only option is to move forward. Vierros-Villeneuve agreed that there had to be a "European future" for the Serbs, including in the EU and in

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other transatlantic institutions. For its part, Finland was pushing forward visa facilitation for young Serbs so that they feel part of Europe and stakeholders in its future. She added that Kosovo would be a top agenda item at the upcoming GAERC in Brussels.

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North Korea  
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16. (SBU) Vierros-Villeneuve said that the ASEM meeting had highlighted for the EU the importance of the North Korea nuclear issue for its Asian partners. The international community needs to send Pyongyang a clear message that threats to carry out a nuclear test - especially with a showdown with Iran looming - are unacceptable. If North Korea actually carried out a test, it should be severely condemned, and real consequences should result. (Note: The EU subsequently released a statement condemning North Korea,s nuclear test.)

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Georgia  
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17. (SBU) Vierros-Villeneuve agreed with Pekala about the seriousness of the situation in Georgia and the need to show support for Georgian sovereignty. She said that upon his recent return from Tbilisi, Finnish FM Tuomioja told Russian FM Lavrov that Moscow,s response was disproportionate. Vierros-Villeneuve believed that a strong message also needed to be sent to the Georgians that the time was not right to challenge Russia. Vierros-Villeneuve observed that the Russian were feeling strong right now, and that Georgia had developed an unhelpful tendency to present the EU with successive "faits accomplis" when bucking Moscow. DAS Pekala agreed about counseling restraint on Georgia,s part, but said Tbilisi needed to know that the door was open to EU and NATO membership and a European future.

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NATO

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¶18. (C) Vierros-Villeneuve said that Finland had agreed to postpone release of the Finnish-Swedish enhanced partnership proposal until the new Swedish government was formed; the proposal would carry more weight with the new government,s backing. DAS Pekala agreed this could be helpful, but cautioned against waiting too long.

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High Level Dialogue  
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¶19. (U) MFA Director General for Asia and the Americas Elina Kalkku summarized preparations for the October 24-25 High Level Dialogue on Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable Development, noting that it would be hosted jointly by Finnish Minister for Environment Enestam and Minister of Trade and Industry Pekkarinen with Commission participation by DGTREN, DGENV and DGRELEX. The Finns will also invite the German Ministers of Environment and Energy. Hinting at bureaucratic difficulties, Kalkku observed that it had been "quite an innovation" to gather environment and energy officials together, but agreed that it made perfect sense given the natural synergies between energy and climate change. Pekala thanked Finland for its efforts and particularly welcomed the co-chair role for the Ministers of Environment and Trade and Industry.

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UNSC Seat for Guatemala  
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¶10. (C) Kalkku stated that Finland would of course vote for Guatemala and although there had been no formal consultation among EU member states, she felt quite confident that the entire EU would vote for Guatemala. She did note with interest, however, that a recent visitor from Uruguay had said that Latin America may not favor either Venezuela or Guatemala and may look for a third Latin American candidate. She also acknowledged that there was EU concern that Africa would support Venezuela because of strong oil ties.

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Visa Waiver  
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¶11. (U) In response to Pekala,s request for an update on visa waiver discussions within the EU, Kalkku said that she just received the Commission report that will form the basis of Council discussion. She acknowledged that the move to require diplomatic visas as a proposed countermeasure was a possibility. Pekala briefed on the visa waiver roadmap process and underscored that it was a serious and meaningful effort designed to move countries in the right direction. Kalkku advocated for any small step, such as Canada had

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recently taken with Estonia.  
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